

## PREFACE.

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I AM unwilling to lay the following Sketches before the public, without offering a few observations explanatory of the circumstances under which the work was originally undertaken. This is the more necessary, as it will serve, in some measure, to account for imperfections of style and composition, and afford me an opportunity of apologizing for the freedom with which I have presumed to offer opinions, probably not always agreeable, nor suited to many preconceived notions respecting the character, capability, and condition of the Highlanders. Any literary inaccuracies or defects which the more learned reader may discover, proceed from the inexperience of a plain practical soldier, who passed twenty-five years of his life in barracks, in military quarters, and in camps; accustomed, perhaps, to notice passing events, and to exercise his memory, but without the least anticipation or intention of attempting to arrange his recollections into their present form. I have in fact been led on by circumstances to make the attempt, without any premeditated plan. My statements, however, are grounded on authentic documents; on communications from people in whose intelligence and correctness I place implicit confidence; on my own per-